

the House, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. CHANDLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to honor the memory of one of our former colleagues who passed away on February 16th of this year. He was a former Member from my home State of Kentucky, and, among other things, had the unusual distinction of representing two different congressional districts in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Former Congressman Gene Snyder was a man of steadfast conviction. He could always be counted on to fight for his constituents, and you always knew where he stood on the issues. Congressman Snyder had a way with people and a memorable sense of humor. He loved to tell stories and he used those stories to foster close relationships with Republicans and Democrats alike.

We often talk about a different time in Congress, when Members discussed policy over dinner with their families, when Washington was more cordial, and when there was a sense of kinship among fellow legislators. Gene Snyder was one of those Members committed to fostering that kinship, which is far too rare in these halls today.

Most Kentuckians will remember Gene Snyder by the freeway that bears his name. And while one road certainly doesn't sum up a man, in many ways, it is appropriate. While Gene Snyder was never afraid to vote against what he thought was a wasteful appropriations bill, few Members have fought harder to provide the seeds of economic growth for their home region.

Before Gene Snyder got to Congress, his district faced numerous age-old problems; transportation deficits, traffic issues and flooding from the Ohio River to name a few. I can remember hearing stories about people floating through the streets of Louisville in boats during the historic flood of 1937.

These problems, and many more, were tackled by Gene Snyder. He helped complete the Jefferson County floodwall. He showed great leadership in the construction of a new terminal at Standiford Field in Louisville. And he helped secure funding for the Clay Wade Bailey Bridge in Northern Kentucky, better connecting Covington and Cincinnati and helping to drive economic growth in that region.

There were countless other projects that Congressman Snyder developed, and all the bridges he built, the highways he paved and the buildings he raised have helped provide jobs to thousands of our fellow Kentuckians.

These jobs, and the opportunities that resulted from his efforts, will be Gene Snyder's lasting contribution to the constituents who he took such pride in serving. It is my honor this evening to celebrate Gene Snyder's life and his legacy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF THE HONORABLE GENE SNYDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, like my colleague from Kentucky, I rise to honor former Congressman Gene Snyder. Because we find ourselves both as a Congress and a country working to dig ourselves out of a divisive partisan trench, which in recent years has been characterized by petty attacks and contentiousness, my constituents may be surprised to know that I counted Gene Snyder as a friend.

Gene, who was always more interested in the public than publicity, told me a story about a persistent reporter who badgered him about a meeting he wanted to cover. Gene didn't want the reporter at the meeting and refused to disclose the location. So when Gene spotted the reporter in his rearview mirror tailing him to the meeting, Gene said to heck with it. He told his aide to head for the mountains, and led the reporter on a 100-mile wild goose chase through Virginia.

Now, as a former member of the news media, I won't applaud that tactic, but I admire the competitive spirit it exemplified. In any event, that was the last time that reporter tried to get the best of Gene.

Although Gene and I enjoyed each other's company, you would be hard-pressed to find more than a handful of issues upon which the honorable Gene Snyder and I agreed in the political arena. But political issues are only one part of this job, the other being serving one's constituents.

As far apart as we sat on the ideological spectrum, Gene Snyder's model of constituent service is one I aspire to closely emulate. In his three decades of service, Congressman Snyder set the example of how to serve a district. He set the bar, and he set it high.

When Gene held my seat, we in Louisville knew that we had a representative with an open door and an open ear for all of us. If it concerned our community, no matter, big or small, was unworthy of his attention. He welcomed us warmly, shared a laugh, and left us with a feeling that something would soon be done to address anything from a clerical glitch to the need for a new highway. Inevitably, and remarkably, for an age when distrust of a power-hungry government dominated, the issue would be handled effectively and expediently.

As I now work to institute my own open door policy, I am consistently cognizant that I follow the example set by a predecessor and a friend, Gene Snyder. I look to him as a fervent believer that democracy stems not from

politicians, but from the citizens we represent, and I endeavor to capture that spirit as he did.

Gene Snyder was my representative, he was my friend, and he will be greatly missed. I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring his life and service to his constituents.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE BUDGET, DEBT AND THE BLUE DOG'S IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, we are gathered here this evening to talk about the budget, to talk about the debt and to talk about the Blue Dogs' Iraqi accountability legislation. This is a very, very important time for us, and we hope that this hour will be illuminating and be very informative for everyone.

We are accustomed having my good friend, MIKE ROSS, in this position. MIKE ROSS is from Arkansas, and, as we know, there was a tornado that went through there. MIKE ROSS and a group of us just came back yesterday from Europe. MIKE ROSS had to jump on a plane and go down to Arkansas to see about his constituents, and we want to make sure that we send our prayers down to the folks in Arkansas.

Of course, MIKE knows that we stand ready to help in every way we can to make sure that they get the services that they need. So we are here to carry on.

We have a great lineup and array of Blue Dogs here tonight to carry on and to talk about the budget, we want to talk about the debt, we want to talk about our Iraq resolution that we have before us, and the whole issue of accountability.

Mr. Speaker, as we get started, I want to call your attention to our chart. As you know, one of the hallmarks of the Blue Dogs is fiscal responsibility and accountability. Let's look at the national debt and what it is today.

If we look at it correctly, it is now \$8.773 trillion. The share for each individual in this Nation is \$29,000, and it continues to go up. We want to talk about that tonight. The Blue Dogs have a plan. We want to talk about our 12-point plan to bring down this debt. It is one of the most horrendous areas that we have to deliberate on.

We want to get started with some of our Blue Dogs that are here. First, I

want to recognize our distinguished co-chair from the great State of Tennessee, Representative COOPER. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Georgia. Mr. SCOTT does an outstanding job, not only representing his constituents, but also helping our Nation get on the right track.

As the gentleman has mentioned, every single Blue Dog has that sign outside his or her office. It is a troubling sign, because it shows that in our 230-plus year history, our Nation has borrowed \$8.7 trillion. That is a lot of money. Sadly, \$3 trillion-plus have come in the last several years. So we are on an accelerating borrowing pace. That means the interest bills, the interest we are putting on our kids and grandkids, is mounting very rapidly.

Since that number is so hard for anyone to understand, it is important that you drill down and see what your individual share is. Every listener tonight, everyone in this Chamber and back home, their individual share, man, woman or child, even an infant in this country is born with a \$29,000 debt before they are even able to breathe their first breath of air.

But as troubling as that number is, I am worried that doesn't tell the whole story, because there is a Treasury document here that is called The Financial Report of the United States Government, put out by the U.S. Treasury. It says that using modern business-like accounting, unlike the accounting that the Federal Government traditionally uses, it says that according to modern accounting, our real debt burden isn't \$8.7 trillion, as massive as that is, this document from the U.S. Treasury Department says the real debt burden is \$50 trillion. That is our fiscal exposure.

It goes on to say that our individual share of that massive debt is not \$29,000. I wish it were that small. This document says that your individual share, even the moment you are born in this country, is \$170,000. \$170,000. That is a terrific burden.

I hope that this accounting isn't right, but I am worried that this is the right accounting. Most Americans know already that today the U.S. stock market fell over 400 points. As a percent, that is not great. It is 3.3 percent. But it is still a worrisome fall. The Chinese stock market fell even more today. It fell at least 9 percent, or at least the Shanghai market.

We live in an interconnected global economy. That means to me we need Blue Dog common sense now more than ever, because the Blue Dogs are for a strong economy, we are for a growing economy, we are for sensibly living within our means and applying commonsensical economic principles to our budget and economic matters.

So I want to congratulate the gentleman from Georgia for leading this Special Order and leading our Nation to a path of better prosperity for our kids and grandkids.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you much. Would the gentleman share with us that document, where it came from, who wrote it and what it means?

Mr. COOPER. This is called The Financial Report of the United States Government. It is an official U.S. Government document. You can get it on the Web if you go to the U.S. Treasury Web site. It has an introductory letter by the Secretary of Treasury, who is now Henry Paulson, a former Goldman Sachs investment banker.

This document interests me, if is not that long, it describes all the Federal document, but it is the only government document that uses modern, business-like accounting.

Every business back home in our districts, every business with revenues over \$5 million, is required by law to use this accounting. That is what businessmen and women and Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, Optimist Clubs all over America understand. And they are pretty shocked when they learn that the Federal Government doesn't abide by those accounting rules. We cook the books.

We pretend that we can just use what is called cash accounting, which is very simplistic. Only the smallest businesses in America are even allowed to use that. But here the Federal Government with a budget of \$3 trillion a year uses cash accounting.

This is the President's budget. This is what it looks like. You can also get this on the Web. But it won't tell you anywhere in this document they are using simplistic cash accounting. They want you to believe that you are getting the true story.

But even if you read this document, you will see that according to the President's numbers and, of course, they put it on the very last page here, it is on page 372, that the debt in the next 5 years, even though the President has promised us that he is going to balance the budget, this says the debt is going up \$3 trillion more.

So it won't be \$8.7 trillion when Bush leaves office, when his successor is elected, it will be closer to \$11 trillion or \$12 trillion. That is fundamentally irresponsible and it means that the burden on our kids and grandkids is going to be even more massive than we can imagine.

So whether you use the President's budget or his own Secretary of Treasury's budget, we need to be focusing on these matters.

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The Blue Dogs are the leading group in Congress to focus on this. No constituent passes our doors without seeing that sign and reminding them that the Federal Government is borrowing way too much money and putting way too much of an obligation on our kids and our grandkids.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. The gentleman mentioned what happened today in the stock market. It is very interesting to note that this whole

change happened and started early in the morning in China. When you look at how much money we are borrowing from foreign governments, needless to say China with \$360 billion in debt, the interconnectedness of this, and our liability to these other countries, make us so dependent on them. In some cases when they sneeze, we are getting a cold, which is what happened today.

Mr. COOPER. The gentleman is exactly right. I believe the Chinese currently hold almost \$1 trillion in U.S. Treasury bonds. They are our fastest growing lender. They have aggressively purchased U.S. Treasury bonds, and that means increasingly we are paying interest to the Chinese. Our economies are interconnected. I worry that it is a national security issue. It is not just an economic issue anymore because when you get that beholden to another country, if they have any instability or problem or any reluctance to loan us more money, then we have a much bigger problem in this country.

I hope that won't come to pass. I hope that we can get our Nation on a sounder footing. I wish the President had offered us a sounder budget when he gave us one just a few weeks ago in his State of the Union message. We need to work hard on this in the next several weeks to improve it and make sure our Nation is on a stronger course in the future.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. I thank the gentleman from Tennessee. You brought some very significant wisdom, that our debt burden is \$50 trillion, and a very important piece of information from the Treasury Department which gave great expance to what our burden is: \$8.73 trillion in national debt, and our share for each individual in this country is \$29,000.

I would like to call on a distinguished Blue Dog, one of our hard-working Blue Dogs, and one of my fellow travelers. We just returned from an extraordinary trip abroad with NATO, had some very interesting meetings there, BEN CHANDLER, a Representative from the great State of Kentucky.

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be here with Mr. SCOTT tonight, to be a member of the Blue Dog Coalition, and to hear the wonderful presentation by Mr. COOPER of Tennessee who does a tremendous job in this Congress, and who is one of the real consciences of the people here in Washington. Even though some of the news he has to relate to us is not the best of news, the people of this country need to hear the truth, and that is what Mr. COOPER so eloquently gives us on a regular basis.

I very much enjoyed the opportunity to travel this past week with my fellow members of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and there are several Blue Dogs who are represented on that very important task force that we have to try to foster cooperation in a very important alliance we have. The alliance that United States has with NATO and

the other 25 countries in NATO is extremely important to our national security. I don't think people realize how important it is.

It was a pleasure to have an opportunity to travel with Mr. SCOTT, a newly appointed member to that commission, and Ms. BEAN from Illinois who is also here with us tonight. I know she will have a few words to say in a little while. She was with us on that trip.

You know, when we go abroad like that and we talk with our allies, we talk about a lot of things. On this particular occasion, of course, the subject continually came up of Iraq and Afghanistan. NATO is helping us in Afghanistan. We of course in Iraq don't have as many allies as we do in Afghanistan. Some of the countries in NATO have a different view about Iraq than they do about Afghanistan, but we are proud to have their help in Afghanistan. It is very, very important to us because that is an engagement there I think that most of the American people are united, that we have to have success, certainly in Afghanistan.

But whatever anybody thinks about that war or about the war in Iraq, one thing I believe we can all agree upon is that the taxpayer money that is being used for those efforts needs to be used accountably. It needs to be accounted for. That certainly has not been the case.

We in the Blue Dog Coalition came out with a plan not too long ago, a resolution that would require essentially accountability for the use of that money, would make an effort to try to stop the war profiteering that we believe is going on, certainly in Iraq. I hope we can set up a commission in this government, very much like the Truman Commission of World War II, which would look at the expenditure, would actually hold this administration accountable for the expenditures in Iraq.

Now, the importance of that I think is pretty obvious for everybody. Every dollar that we misspend or waste in Iraq is a dollar that cannot be used efficiently to protect our troops, it cannot be used efficiently to get the job done over there, and it is also money taken away from needed programs and services right here in this country.

I don't need to mention all of those programs one by one. We all know what they are, from education, health care, right on down the line. We need those dollars, and those dollars need to be spent appropriately.

But we can even go so far, if you can believe this, to apply some of that wasted money on the national debt. That is what the Blue Dogs talk about all of the time, the national debt in this country.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. If the gentleman would yield, you bring up a very good point. The waste that has happened in Iraq with our military is just astounding. It is very important that the American people realize this is

the trust of our legislation. We are going to support the troops. We are going to have a military and we are going to spend more on our military. We are going to enlarge our military. Under our Democratic leadership, we are going to make our military stronger.

In order to do that, there are two important points, as the gentleman pointed out, in our legislation that will address and act as a catch to stop some of this waste, and that is under our legislation, we will require that the Inspector General in the Defense Department report to Congress quarterly on exactly how the money that Congress is allocating is being spent. And the Inspector General in Iraq for the Reconstruction of Iraq will also report to Congress on how that money is being spent.

So our financial accountability act for Iraq accountability is very important, and I want to just take a minute to point those things out that address how we are going to respond to the concerns of waste and fraud that you have just spoken about.

Mr. CHANDLER. Thank you, Mr. SCOTT. What those points bring to mind is it is the least we can do. As representatives of the people of the United States of America, I believe it is our job to spend their money efficiently. It is right at the top of the list of the important responsibilities that we have and that is what we are trying to do as Blue Dogs.

Now I don't know about you, but I grew up going to church.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Oh, yes.

Mr. CHANDLER. I suspect you did, too.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. You are absolutely right, my friend.

Mr. CHANDLER. And during some of those church services, I would hear time and time again about the notion of stewardship. Is that a word that is familiar to you?

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. It is a word that is very familiar to me.

Mr. CHANDLER. And that is what we are talking about here. We are talking plain and simple about stewardship, are we going to be good stewards of our country. All we have got is our country and the money, the hard work that our citizens do and the money that they contribute to our national government. The least we can do is make sure that the Federal Government spends it properly.

I am concerned about this debt: \$8.7 trillion. And what really is amazing is what Mr. COOPER told us a little earlier tonight, that not only is the debt \$8.7 trillion, this is the debt that the government insiders are familiar with. The public I don't think is really aware of how dramatically large this debt is. But what Mr. COOPER told us was that this doesn't even warm it up. The real debt is more in the neighborhood of \$50 trillion.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. And it comes directly from this administration's Treasury Department. That is why I

wanted Mr. COOPER to make sure he pointed out the authorship. This is not our report to Mr. COOPER. This was put together by the Treasury Department.

Mr. CHANDLER. The \$50 trillion figure comes directly from this administration. What is unfortunate is that this administration has been a large part of the reason that the debt is that high. It is terribly unfortunate. One figure that I saw not too long ago, and you talked about it a little earlier, about our interrelatedness to China, well, we have that connection with many countries all over the world in one way or another, but the number that troubles me is the fact that the Bush administration has borrowed more money from foreign governments in the 6 years that this administration has been in office than all 42 previous administrations combined.

Now, Mr. SCOTT, I don't know about you, but that is one of the more astonishing figures that I have been privy to since I have been in the United States Congress. I am shocked about that.

What I hope we can accomplish as we go forward, and certainly in the effort that we are making tonight, is bring to light a little bit to the American people what kind of financial situation we have in this country and that we have got to get our act together. It is high time that we behave accountably to the American people, that we hold this administration accountable for how they have spent the money. That is what the Blue Dogs want to do. That is why I am proud to be a Blue Dog and proud to be here tonight.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. CHANDLER, I want to make sure that the American people got what you just said. Now, just to make sure that they get it, what you said was that in the last 6 years under this administration this country has borrowed more money from foreign governments than all of the previous administrations going all of the way back to 1789, counting all of the wars, counting the Depression, World War I and World War II, all of the way up to now. From 1789 to 2001, we didn't borrow as much money as we have borrowed in the last 6 years. That is very important.

And the other staggering point about that is just the interest that we are paying on this loan is the fastest growing segment of our budget, and just the interest that we are paying to these countries is more than we are collectively spending on our veterans, on homeland security, and on education. That is a remarkable state of financial irresponsibility; and the Blue Dogs are providing the leadership, have been for many years, and finally we got a first step into this process during the first 100 days under the leadership of Speaker NANCY PELOSI in passing the PAYGO legislation.

Mr. CHANDLER. I am just going to say one more thing and then allow some of my other fine colleagues to have a word on this subject.

When I get ready to tell some of my constituents the nature of this spending problem and particularly the point about this administration borrowing more in 6 years than our country has borrowed in the entirety of its history previous to these 6 years, I advise them to please sit down before they hear this information because they are not going to believe it. It is that extraordinary. I can't believe it. I still can't really get my arms around the fact that we are doing that.

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I think one of the most important points is, when you borrow to that extent and when you get yourself in debt to that extent, it makes you less secure. We are looking for security in this country. That is what the American people want. When you are deeply in debt, I would submit to you that you are, in fact, less secure, and that is what we are getting in this country.

I thank you for the time.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you, and the gentleman brought up some very interesting points. We are going to talk a little bit more about that, but I know the Americans may be asking, well, what are the Blue Dogs going to do? What is their plan?

We have a 12-point plan for budget reform. I want to briefly hit the points right quick. One, require a balanced budget; two, do not let Congress buy on credit; three, put a lid on spending; four, require agencies to put their fiscal house in order; five, make Congress tell taxpayers how much they are spending; six, set aside a rainy day fund; seven, do not hide votes to raise the debt limit; eight, justify spending for all projects; nine, ensure that Congress reads the bills that it is voting on; ten, require honest cost estimates for every bill that Congress votes on; eleven, make sure new bills fit the budget; and twelve, make Congress do a better job of keeping tabs on government programs.

Now, I want to yield to my distinguished friend from Tennessee who is just one of the hardest working Members up here and a leader in the Blue Dogs, Congressman LINCOLN DAVIS from Tennessee. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I can assure my good friend from Georgia that I will not bore the folks for 35 minutes in this House Chamber, nor will I bore you that much, but it is certainly an honor to be with you here in this House Chamber, this historic Chamber.

I asked one of the freshmen Members as we traveled from the Chamber after voting recently through the tunnel going to the Cannon Building, and I said, well, your first 6 weeks, how does it feel? He said, LINCOLN, I want to be honest with you. He said, I never knew how it felt to work in a museum, but I do now.

Working here in this Capitol, where those statues of the tremendous lead-

ers of the past, inside the House Chamber where many decisions have been made, where on December 8 we declared war on Japan in 1941 and then two or 3 days later, after being declared war on by the Axis Nations, Germany and Italy, and that declaration occurred here, declaration of war, really the last declaration of war that has been held inside this House Chamber and declaration of war that only Congress, quite frankly, can declare.

So, being here at this time of history and being on the floor with you and other members of the Blue Dogs certainly is an honor, not a privilege, but an honor that the folks back in my district have given me, and I believe that they expect us to come here and be bipartisan in our efforts, that we are not here to be demagoguing the other side or critical, but you have to try to work in a harmonious way to find solutions to whatever difficulties we have in this Nation.

I had a Member ask me when I first came here, LINCOLN, what did you want to change when you came up here? And I thought real hard, and it really did not take a lot of thought. My answer was I did not want to change America. No country in the world has reached the level of helping its citizens the way that this government of the United States of America has. I do not want to change it, but there are problems. We need to fix those, and we can do it by working together.

So, for me, my challenge to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and colleagues here on this side of the aisle, let us start being a little more civil with each other.

I left from this House Chamber after the debate we had on whether or not to agree with the President's plan for a surge in Iraq is something we wanted to do in this Chamber, and it got to the point where the questions of someone's patriotism became a part of that debate and dialogue. Of course, some may obviously follow suit with that, but we had a debate about whether or not we supported the troops. The resolution said we do. We had a debate about whether we agreed with the strategy, apparently the new strategy of this President to engage an additional numbers of troops in Iraq.

Now I want to talk a moment about that budget we looked at and at the deficit. I remember I was elected in 1980 to the State House in Tennessee. As I was travelling from my home of Byrdstown in Pall Mall to Nashville to the State capital, it came across the radio that we had just increased the national debt ceiling to a trillion dollars. That frightened me. A trillion dollars in the early 1980s. I remember that as we talked about increasing that debt ceiling by \$20 billion or \$15 billion how difficult it was in this House Chamber. Now we increase it by hundreds of billions of dollars without even really having an up-or-down vote on that particular debt ceiling increase.

I thought how ironic it was that in 1980 how difficult it was for a debt ceil-

ing to be increased, and now it just seems to be as if a snap of the finger and all of the sudden, we reach that level.

Then I watched for the next 8 years, the next 12 years, as that debt not gradually, but very rapidly rose in the 3 and 4 trillions of dollars. I am thinking in a 12-year period of time, how is that possible. If we look back basically almost 200 years, we reached a trillion, and suddenly we had doubled and quadrupled what we had in that period of time.

Since 2001, even with the surpluses that were applied to reduce the debt that this country owed, for a period of almost 4 years, out 4 years of surplus budgets where we had more than we spent, we took in more than we spent, and started paying down the debt, I am surprised that almost \$3 trillion in the last 5 years has been added to that figure down there.

I often hear people talk about the first thing a baby does—my chief of staff just recently had a newborn son in early December, and they nicknamed him Willis, a pretty little thing, handsome little fellow. He came to one of my open meetings with him. On Saturday, we had 24 throughout the district. I represent 24 counties. The first thing little Willis did when he came to this earth, he started crying. I know now why he was crying. He realizes that this country, that these leaders in this Chamber, that this Nation has handed him a \$29,000-plus debt, that he does not even have a job yet to pay off, and if we continue to go as we are going, before he gets his first job, he will owe more money than five times the first house cost me that I bought for our family in the late 1960s.

I want to talk now about Iraq for a moment. I hear people in this Chamber talk about cut and run being the policy of Democrats and staying the course being the policy of the White House. Both of those are wrong. I do not think standing the course is going to get it done, and cut and run is something, quite frankly, that I go back in history, and I cannot find that example, except some folks might say Vietnam.

But I saw Vice President CHENEY in Japan early last week thanking our troops, and it dawned upon me that, let me say now we have troops in Japan after World War II. We have troops in Germany after World War II. I went back and looked at the tens of thousands of troops we have in Korea and South Korea after the Korean War; I go to Kosovo and in Bosnia and in Serbia and in the Balkans, and I realize that we have forces there from the late 1990s, although there were those in this Chamber on the other side of the aisle that called that Nation building and wanted to know when then-President Clinton was going to give us a time certain, even I think the presidential candidate at that time as well who later became the President in 2001, even he was talking about Nation building and a time certain that our troops should be pulled out.

As we debate this issue, it is ironic to me that anyone would accuse someone else of asking for some of the same considerations that they asked for a certainty of. But we are still in Bosnia and Kosovo and, quite frankly, this President that is here now and this Congress saw fit to stay there, that we should keep the peace with our friends of NATO.

But I look at other parts of the world. We are in Turkey. Our ally in NATO, the Turks, we still have bases there. But then I got to thinking, well, now, we had a war in the Middle East, a U.N.-sanctioned, totally supported, my understanding is we probably had three or four times the number of troops that went in 1991 to remove Saddam Hussein from his aggressive actions in Kuwait, and we forced him back into his country. Then we had north and south no-fly zones, had him pretty much contained. But we still have troops in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. We still have troops in Kuwait. We still have troops in places like United Arab Emirates. Are we going to have troops in Iraq when this is over? This is never going to be over.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. You make a very good point, and I think it is tantamount and the American people have seen through and are seeing through the rhetoric of the Bush administration. They are not buying cut and run. The American people went to the polls in November and they did not go to the polls to cut and run. They went to the polls to change direction, a new direction.

There is no question about the fact that we have a vital interest in the Middle East. We know that for the foreseeable future, clearly 45 percent of all of the known oil reserves would be under that region and certainly under Iran alone. All of the geologists have pointed out that 25 percent is under that region. There is a great responsibility for us all there. Nobody is talking about cut and run.

We are talking about what is happening here is a civil war, and these Iraqis have got to fight that out for themselves, just as surely as it would not have been right for Germany or France to come and plop a hundred or 200,000 troops in the middle of our civil war. That had to be settled by us. They have got to settle their civil war. We have got to contain the situation, and that is how this new direction needs to evolve.

I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee. I thank my friend from Georgia.

I think, what my hope is, all of us become a little bit more civil in this debate that we are having and realize that this is about America. We want security and we want peace. We want the Iraqis to win. What we have done is destroyed an Army in Iraq and I agree with that, we have destroyed an Army in Iraq that was able to defend, or at least to resist the Iranian Army with three times the population they have

for a period of over 10 years. We now have to be the Army for the Iraqis.

It is our responsibility to defend Iraq. In essence, I think we have to put our troops along the Syrian and Iranian border to be sure that no one interferes with Iraq and let the Iraqis settle their own differences. Twelve million Iraqis voted in December of 2005. They established their government; it is there. Departments elected. It is time we let them govern themselves, but we must protect them.

You have been very kind to allow me to be here participating in this Blue Dog conversation.

Before I leave, one thing I want to say, one of the reasons we have been in the Middle East since shortly after World War II, quite frankly, we were there to keep Germany from getting all the oil that could have helped them delay the war much longer in World War II, maybe even have won some territories. Europe may have looked totally different if Hitler and his Nazis had been able to get control of the oil fields in the Middle East. We have been there and have been invited by governments in the Middle East for some time. Folks may or may not have agreed with us, but the leaders who were there invited us to help them. Quite frankly, there was fear in the Cold War that that might go to the Communist Nations of Russia and perhaps even China. So we have been there for a reason.

We now are there we say to protect ourselves from terrorists. My opinion is that we have to stay there to protect the Iraqis from other aggressor Nations and let them solve their problems and then we can bring our troops home. We will be there for a long time. The American public understands that.

Thank you for allowing me to speak.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Well, thank you. The gentleman from Tennessee brings a lot of depth to his thinking, and we appreciate his contribution tonight.

Now I want to recognize and yield time to my distinguished friend from the great State of Ohio, the sixth district. He serves on the House Committee on Financial Services and the House Committee on Science and Technology, my good friend, Congressman CHARLIE WILSON. I yield to the gentleman.

□ 2045

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I am here this evening to support the Blue Dog Coalition, and ask for a realistic and responsible budget as we move forward.

I believe that for so long, we have been out of touch, and I believe that the debt that has been created by this administration has been overwhelming. And I know that more people in America need to understand what really has happened and how there has been wasteful spending, not accountability, difficulties that have just been swept away and we need to stop and look at it.

So I am pleased as a new Member of Congress from Ohio to be a member of the Blue Dog Coalition. I believe that, as we take a closer look at what is going on with this budget that has been submitted to us, that we realize that there are not only numbers that don't add up, but there are assumptions that are made that really would go against any principle of gap accounting and any type of realistic obligations that we have to the American people to explain to them.

The numbers show that while real fiscal responsibility is so sorely needed, this is not what we have in this budget. And it becomes important that we have people like the Blue Dogs who have, and I have my new sign outside my new door in the Cannon Building at 226, of which I am very proud to be a member of the Blue Dog Coalition to show that every man, woman, and child in this country is in debt \$29,000 as of today. And that number may be realistically much lower than what it actually is.

The numbers also show that we need accountability. In 2004 alone, the Federal Government spent \$25 billion that cannot be accounted for. I have heard other rumors and other stories of money that just disappeared.

This is not fair. It is not fair to the people, the taxpayers whose money it belongs to. It is not fair for the programs that we could be doing for our seniors, for the education of our children, the health care that we could provide, and to help those in middle America, the working families to help with opportunities for them.

We were able in this new Congress, to move forward. And just yesterday, Congressman SCOTT, I did a TV interview in Youngstown, Ohio. And the person interviewing me asked why did we prohibit the other side from being able to amend and change in our first 100 hours. And I said, quite frankly, that I thought we needed to do that in order to be able to get the issues taken care of that we did. And it was with this kind of responsibility that we moved forward, and that I believe now we can work together and accomplish what needs to be accomplished, but certainly looking at the realism of what is going on with our national debt.

We need to work together, not a Democrat or a Republican, but rather an American initiative, to make sure that every dollar we spend, every decision we make is for the betterment of our country.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. If the gentleman will yield for a point. I think it is very important, you pointed out that in 2004, if I heard you correctly, \$24 billion of Federal Government spending went absolutely unaccounted for. But the other point of that is that this Congress, or the Republican-controlled Congress during that time, did not hold the executive branch accountable for the omission. So not only was the money unaccounted for, there was no means of putting forward accountability by the executive branch.

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. I thank you for that observation.

I truly believe this is what the American people said in this November's election. They said: We need accountability. We need people to be responsible. And that is why the election turned the way it did. And I believe now that it is important for us to pursue every opportunity to make sure that we have fiscal responsibility, to make sure that we are doing the right things for the people, and keeping an eye on our national debt.

Just last week, I received a graph in my office, and the amount of debt that we are paying to foreign countries is huge in comparison to what we are spending on education or health care for our seniors. That is the thing that is most difficult to understand about this, is how we can let the really important things go and spend all this money on interest. I know as a businessman, I could not run my business that way. As a person, I couldn't run my personal finances that way. And so there is no reason to think that we should run our government that way.

Moving forward, I just think that we need to be sure that this Congress is responsible. And one of the primary ways of doing that, that the Blue Dogs are advocating, is PAYGO, and that is as we pay as we go, just like you and I do in our budgets at home. If we are going to buy a new car, we need to make a sacrifice of something else. If we are going to go on a vacation, there needs to be something traded for that. PAYGO, quite frankly, Mr. SCOTT, says that what we really have to do is to make sure, if we are going to pay forward, that we eliminate something that we are doing now, and then we pay as we go.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. I certainly thank the gentleman for his observations. They have been very illuminating to us especially on the budget. We have a number of other Blue Dogs here we want to bring into this.

I want to now recognize my good friend from Illinois and one of my fellow travelers. We just returned together from NATO, and she has some refreshing observations, I am sure, from that trip of how it relates. She is a good friend and one of the hard-working Blue Dogs who is making a great contribution to this Congress, and that is Ms. Melissa Bean of Illinois. I yield the young lady as much time as she may need.

Ms. BEAN. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding. It is always an honor to join you here on the floor as it was an honor to join you during the NATO parliamentary assembly that we attended together. And one thing that didn't come up that you mentioned earlier with Congressman CHANDLER was that, in addition to visiting NATO headquarters in Brussels, we also visited the Landstuhl Medical Facility in Germany where our returning wounded are coming from both Iraq and Afghanistan. And it was important

to meet with them and hear from them their firsthand experiences and what brought them there, why they are fighting so hard, and their concern for those in the platoons that are still fighting. And one of the things I wanted to talk about is bringing some accountability to that process.

And I will also mention that there has been a lot in the press recently about Walter Reed and some concerns about infrastructure and investment that I know we are working to address as we look at appropriations. But it was encouraging to see the medical professionals, their commitment to facilities and just the top-notch care that our returning men and women who have been wounded are getting and hear how pleased they were with the level of medical support they are getting.

But the Iraqi War Cost Accountability Resolution which we in the Blue Dogs introduced is what I wanted to touch on, because several of my Blue Dog colleagues and yourself, Mr. SCOTT, have mentioned accountability, and I think it certainly what our constituents expect of us. And one of the reasons we supported this bill is it provides accountability across four different disciplines. It provides spending accountability; it enforces transparency, and requires the Department of Defense Inspector General to provide regular reports on exactly what spending has taken place, what spending hasn't taken place, what projects we are working on, what the status of those projects are, what the contracting process is. And also, not just what we in this country are providing, but also what are other countries that are allied with us are providing to what is going on there as well. It provides contracting accountability in addition to spending accountability, with a commission akin to the Truman Commission that was done in the past to oversee the contracting process, the policies, how they are being carried out, and whether those contractors are fulfilling their obligations as well. And it also puts sanctions in place for any kinds of fraud or abuse that can be happening.

It also provides budget accountability. As you and I know, and we have talked about this in our Blue Dog meetings, there have been six emergency supplementals, and those emergency supplementals have all been for war spending. Given the number of years we have all been engaged in this process in Iraq, it is no longer an emergency. This is an unaccounted for spending; this isn't something that we are surprised by. And so what we are requiring in this bill is on budget war appropriations. And it also requires Iraqi accountability. So let me go through all four of those, and then I will describe what I mean by the Iraqi accountability.

Spending accountability, contracting accountability, budgeting accountability, and Iraqi accountability.

And that means that we need to hold accountable not only the Prime Minister al-Maliki, but the Iraqi government, to be accountable first and foremost to protecting themselves on a sovereign basis. And as you alluded to earlier, it is our job to help contain the situation from insurgents outside, but they need to, for their own security, be first and foremost in assuming a higher degree of responsibility, as many of us supported the President when he said, as the Iraqi people and the Iraqi military stand up, we can stand down. And so we have to hold them accountable to doing that so we can.

I am going to lastly talk about the budget in general and why I am a Blue Dog. You have your sign up there, we all do, and it talks about the \$9 trillion of debt that we are now at. And I think Congressman COOPER alluded to the fact that the foreign borrowing that we are doing is contributing to that. We are now borrowing, as a Nation, \$7 billion to \$8 billion per working day from foreign countries: \$2 billion to \$3 billion of that is just the government alone. And at that rate, we are going to continue to exacerbate this debt and the individual share that we are passing on to every American.

I think, as a parent, I often remind myself that tough love is important. It is not my job as a parent to tell my kids what they want to hear, but to tell them what they need to hear. And I think the Blue Dogs bring that same kind of tough love to our constituents and to our Nation, and hopefully to our Congress, because we need to be talking about what Americans need to hear, not what they want to hear. And so I am glad to be joining you tonight.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. If the gentlewoman would yield for a moment. I would like very much to engage you in the feeling of that trip. And it was so important to gather with representatives of those 26 other nations and 13 associate nations with NATO, because we have got to understand, we can't go it alone.

Ms. BEAN. Absolutely.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. One of the fundamental charges I felt and responsibilities I felt going, and you did, too, we talked about it, was we have got to improve the image of working with other nations to move forward. But I think that the highlight to me and I think to you was that visit with the soldiers.

Ms. BEAN. Very much so.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. And you and I have talked about that, and I just want to share for a moment the touching experience that we shared going and flying into Ramstein Air Base and going to Landstuhl to the medical center and going from room to room. We went and we talked with soldiers fresh off the battlefield in very serious conditions, and it was a remarkable experience. And I know you joined me in saying that on the floor, we salute those soldiers.

Ms. BEAN. Absolutely we do.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. And we just want to say thank you personally to those soldiers for their sacrifice, for their service, and express to them a great gratitude for a very, very grateful Nation.

Ms. BEAN. Our entire Nation.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. We are so proud to do that.

Ms. BEAN. I would agree. Our entire Nation is grateful to them, and to their families who were there supporting them through their injuries.

And on that note I will yield back, because I know we have Congresswoman SANCHEZ, who is also anxious to speak.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. We certainly thank you. And I hope you might hang around a little bit. We may get into a little soliloquy here.

I would like very much to now recognize one of our longstanding Blue Dogs, certainly established as a leader in this Congress, one who befriended me, one who makes a sterling contribution as a leader of the United States Congress, the young lady from California, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ. I yield the young lady as much time as she may need.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. I thank my colleague for putting together this hour to discuss what I think is something that is very important; that is, what the Blue Dogs are thinking about in this Congress and what we have been trying to do.

Now, I will tell you that I have been in the Congress for 11 years. This is my 11th year. I have been a Blue Dog the entire time. And that really comes from the fact that before I came to the Congress, I was an investment banker. I am an MBA, I have been in the international finance arena for 14 years before coming to this Congress.

So people ask me, what is the thing that you worry about the most when you go to sleep at night? And the answer is always the same for me: The structural financial debt and deficit that we have in Washington, D.C., because most people have not looked and seen and realized what has been going on here in Washington, D.C., but I have seen it in the last 11 years.

□ 2100

That is why, as a Blue Dog, I also have that sign up that says what today's national debt is and how much of that \$29,000, if every man, child, woman in America, would give us \$29,000 today, we would be able to bring down the national debt. But the fact of the matter is, we don't. We don't, and the debt keeps climbing.

So a few years ago, we were trying to think about, well, how is it that this has happened? Because when I came, it was in 1997. I had 4 years under President Clinton, and at that time, the debt of this Nation, the interest payments on that, was 18 cents of every dollar that we collected, 18 cents.

That means if we collect a dollar from you in taxes, 18 cents of it we don't spend because we are paying the

interest cost on that. Imagine if you did that in your home for every dollar.

So what did we do? We worked hard. We instituted PAYGO. What does that mean? Well, it means you don't make any new spending unless you are going to tax, put in an amount of money for it, or you are going to take it away from some other area you are already spending on in order to spend in your new priority area, much the way people do it at home when we have to decide among the priorities.

Okay, well, this month, September, I have to get the shoes for the kids for school, so that means that there are going to be no days out of that month that we get to go out and eat at a restaurant. I mean, you just make up for it in one way or another.

But the Congress and the United States do not do this. They keep spending, even when they give tax cuts. So that means if your boss told you we are going to give you a 70 percent cut in the amount of money you take home, and you go home and you tell your husband that, but he still keeps spending the same amount of money every month, he doesn't bring his expenses down.

So it is a problem. So we spend, I would say, honestly, about 700 to \$800 billion more a year than the monies we take in.

Now, we will throw numbers around, to \$143 billion, deficit, \$400 billion, deficit, \$358 billion. No, no, no, no, no. The reality is that we are overspending by anywhere between 700 and \$800 billion every year. That is why this number goes up, because we cannot get this under control.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. If the gentlelady would yield for a moment, I think it very important for us to realize, you also alluded to it, you might want to hit on it a little more, the unfairness of it all, the war being paid on borrowed money. Every dime we are spending in our government, for our services, on borrowed money, it is not going to last that long. Many civilizations and nations have gone down because of ballooning debt.

If you look at all of them that have gone down, ballooning debt is what played such a great part, and the selfishness of the tax cuts, the war, whatever we are doing, and we are selfishly doing that and putting the burden, as you alluded to, on the backs of our children and our grandchildren. I think you make an excellent point there.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Absolutely. So I started in this Congress 11 years ago, and we spent 18 cents of every dollar just on paying interest on interest payments. Then we tightened our belts; we did PAYGO. President Clinton and others, we worked together, we brought it down. In the year 2000 when President Bush took over, we were paying 11 cents of every dollar on interest. So we had brought it down.

Then, of course, the President decided to give tax breaks to some of the

wealthiest Americans. I know, because I got a tax break, but not everybody got a tax break. The real people who really needed the tax breaks, I think, did not receive them. That is why I didn't vote for it. I received it because the majority, the Republicans at that time voted it in, but I didn't vote for it because I know what fair is fair.

If you get opportunity in this country and you work hard, and you get a few breaks and a little bit of luck along the way, that can happen in America for almost anybody. And some of it is luck, and you happen to make money. I think you should understand that to keep America full of opportunities, we need to pay our taxes.

So I am willing to do that, but not this President, because he cut the taxes on the people who had lots of money and who were making lots of money. His own comptroller told us several years ago that 70 percent of the deficit every year in this country is due to the tax breaks that the President gave. In other words, we kept spending even though we didn't take in revenue. In fact, we returned back revenue.

Then, of course, we have the \$3 billion a week of money we spend in Iraq. I will not tell you the way I feel. This President went into Iraq on the cheap. He didn't think that Americans would really want to spend the kind of money it took to put in 200,000 or 300,000 troops to do the job the day we went in. So he told his Secretary of Defense, despite what the generals told him, Shinseki, who said we need at least 200,000 or more troops in there, they did it at the level of 110, and now we are paying for it. Now we have been in a war much longer than we ever anticipated, much longer than the President ever anticipated.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Especially what was most disheartening was the buildup to that war, to use the credibility of General Colin Powell, and then to abandon what you refer to, with the huge number of troops, the Powell doctrine. You are going to go in, you go in with force.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. So we find ourselves there longer than we are supposed to be, and we ask ourselves, how much longer, \$3 billion a week on the credit card? Wait till America really figures out that they have not paid for this war. I think they are going to be very angry at that point. I see I have taken most of your time.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. We thank the young lady from California for your excellent insight on this, and your commentary was certainly well received, and it helped to shed the light on the debt and the importance of it.

So we appreciate this hour, the Blue Dog hour, as we continue each Tuesday night to talk about the budget, to talk about bringing fiscal responsibilities and being good stewards to the taxpayers' money. It has been a good evening.

HONORING FORMER
CONGRESSMAN GENE SNYDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRALEY of Iowa). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. The subject of our Special Order tonight is to remember a great man of this Chamber and a great Kentuckian and a great person, a friend to virtually all who knew him. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to pay tribute to my friend and fellow Kentuckian, Congressman Gene Snyder.

Born in Louisville, Gene Snyder began his political career in 1954 as a city attorney for Jeffersontown, Kentucky, at the age of 26. In 1962 he ran for Congress and was elected to represent the Third District of Kentucky. After losing his bid for reelection in 1964, he turned right around and ran again in 1966. This time, he was elected to the seat that I now hold from Kentucky's Fourth District.

He went on to serve Kentucky and the Nation for another 20 years until his retirement in 1986, bringing a record of credit upon his office and doing great service to the people of Kentucky's Fourth District. Gene had a tireless work ethic, both in Washington and in Kentucky's Fourth District. He was a master political operator and strategist, and his dedication to the conservative cause was without equal in the 1960s and 1970s.

He stood by Barry Goldwater for President and was swept out of office in the 1964 Johnson landslide, only to return 2 years later.

I can personally relate to that and Gene's character and his persistence, having lost my first election and announcing on election night that I was running again and getting up the next morning and going to work for 2 more years to win and to make a difference.

Gene was a great example with his work ethic, with his character, with his devotion and his tenacity. He enjoyed campaigning, and he relayed to me stories of many people who cut their proverbial teeth on his campaigns. I have heard stories literally from hundreds of people across the old Fourth District who remember him, who remember meeting with him.

He worked and reaped the benefits for those who followed him in office. He laid a foundation for those of us in the delegation who came after him. Ground work for a strong Republican Party in

the Fourth District, campaigning was not something that Gene did every 2 years. It was a life-style for him.

He was in a constant state of campaigning, reaching out, building friendships, reaching across the aisle, reaching across the fence on an arm, across the wire at the county fair, meeting people in storefronts. He used to tell me how on Saturdays he would often get in his car when he was back in the district and drive Highway 42 from Pewee Valley where he lived on up towards northern Kentucky, stopping in small coffee shops, in storefronts to visit with ordinary people.

He was a man without pretense, one who people simply knew as Gene. Everyone from our region still remembers Gene's famous campaign jingle, and more than one person has nostalgically sung the whole song to me word for word since I got into politics in 2001. We have heard those words: "Vote for Gene Snyder. He is your working Congressman."

In fact as recently as the last few years, that jingle, which has not been used in a campaign since 1984, was still considered the best political song in the radio stations in Louisville. Gene thoroughly enjoyed interacting with his constituents, and his enthusiasm for his job showed in his ability to recall the names of thousands with whom he came in contact.

Even more telling was the fact that many of his constituents simply knew him as Gene. They never knew the fact that their Gene was considered by columnist Jack Anderson here in Washington as one of the 10 most influential Members of the House of Representatives because of his work ethic, because of his knowledge of the rules, his knowledge of policy and procedure, and the commitment that he made to the citizens of his district and to this country.

During his time in the House, Gene was an unyielding force whose visionary efforts laid the groundwork to improve our region and the lives of Kentuckians for generations to come. Though a fiscal conservative through and through, he worked tirelessly to bring Federal funds back to Kentucky and the Fourth District.

He did this for one purpose: he understood the value of investment and meaningful infrastructure for economic growth, to lay a foundation for job creation in the future. The key to that is what we see today, areas that were farm fields 25 years ago, 20 years ago, 15 years ago have born the fruits of his investment, the seeds of his vision that were planted in economic development and economic growth that has made this area the Fourth District from the eastern part of Louisville up through northern Kentucky one of the greatest technology growth corridors in the Commonwealth and also in the Ohio Valley.

When my friend Rick Robinson, the new legislative director for Gene's successor, now Senator JIM BUNNING, at-

tended a Congressional Research Service briefing on policy and procedure as a new congressional staffer, he told me recently that many of the examples that were cited by the instructors on parliamentary procedure, on the rules, on the way the House of Representatives works were all centered around Gene Snyder and his efforts, his example of being able to build momentum, his example of being able to force an issue when it was necessary or deter or slow one down and that it was not going to be productive for his party or for the citizens of the Fourth District.

It is rumored that when he would walk into the committee with the Jefferson rules, the rules of the House under one arm, the chairman would simply lean over and ask him, Well, Gene, what do you want this time? As a member of the Public Works and Transportation Committee, he helped secure Federal funding for critical transportation infrastructure in Kentucky.

Some of Gene's projects included the Big Mac Bridge of I-471 from Newport over to Cincinnati dedicated in 1981, Clay Wade Bailey Bridge from Covington to Cincinnati, which opened in 1971. He also secured Federal dollars to protect Bellevue and Dayton from flood waters of the Ohio River. He was responsible for creative engineering to bring about, from a legislative perspective, the construction of the bridge over the Markland Dam.

I would like to highlight his creativity on these for a moment. Gene was a man who built relationships and friendships on both sides of the aisle. He was known for his card games. He was known for a happy hour that he ran out of his office in the days of the old House.

In fact, he told me late one night at his house years ago, the story of how the I-471 bridge came about. He said to me, he said, Geoff, how do you think we got that bridge? Answering as somebody from the outside, I said, Well, I figure you had the studies from the Corps of Engineers and the economic impact and the designs and the budget. He laughed and he said, No, it was the happy hour that got Newport, Kentucky, that bridge.

He told me how Tip O'Neill, who was a good friend of his, would regularly come by, the Speaker of the House, to his office, sit with him, play cards, have an occasional drink. One night he had come by, had a few drinks and sat back in Gene's chair, and the Speaker put his feet up on the desk and said, Gene, you've got your bridge. He built relationships to get results. He built partnerships for success on both sides of the aisle in the House of Representatives.

□ 2115

Markland Lock and Dam is another area that illustrates his creativity in legislation. He made a comment to me on another conversation and he said, you have got to make sure you have